1:Sanders Z-5,† (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

public facilities can also be provided where the people are concentrated in villages.

Students of village life, in addition to deciding why settlements are found where they are, also try to describe the different shapes which the settlements assume. In Greece one finds a great many compact (nucleated) villages in which the lanes move in all directions from the central square and houses are built along these lanes. Another type, found, for instance, in the northern Peloponnesos between Corinth and Patras, is the line village which extends like a ribbon along some main highway and has little depth in either direction. Sometimes these line villages also follow a narrow river valley. In any event, the lay of the land contributes to the shape of the settlement, as well as to its aesthetic effect upon the passerby.

The Importance of Roads

One need not sit in the village square or around a fire in the main room of a peasant's house very long before learning that roads are important topics of conversation.[1] They loom large in the peasant's consciousness, revealing a growing desire on the part of the villagers for a rapid link with the outside. Their isolated world is breaking down, much to their joy, and they are feeling more and more a part of the body politic of Greece.

Today one can travel to most of the major towns of Greece on relatively narrow but high-speed, black-topped roads. Every few miles an all-weather gravel road leads off from these highways to serve a number of villages through which it winds; it also serves an even greater number connected with it by a road passable only in good weather or by a donkey track over which no motor vehicle can travel. Many familiar with the contribution of the American aid program to Greece maintain that, aside from the turning of the tide against the Communist guerrillas, the most lasting reminder of American help will be the greatly expanded road system. In Northern Greece, in particular, military roads are being constructed through areas which formerly were hours away from any contact with trucks or buses; and in all parts of Greece villagers through the "personal labor" program are building roads to connect their communities with some good highway not too far away.

Sensing the stress placed upon roads, we began to talk to people about the difference that a new road made to the villages it reached. Everywhere the testimony was much the same. One nomarch (or prefect) gave this explanation: "With a new road the state functions can be more immediately brought to the people. The new agricultural extension program can be taken to a village on a road and people can go to the center to talk to the officials. But there are more gradual changes as well: the peasant wants to improve his home because his wider travel helps him see a better life; he wants to keep his home cleaner."

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 1963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

The Area Surrounding Vasilika

241
[621] The inhabitants of Vasilika, as the village will henceforth be called, are farmers and shepherds. The farmers cultivate the land in the plains adjacent to
361 the low-lying ridge on which most of the houses are built. As a consequence of
[423] the dowry and inheritance system in the region, some of the fields near Vasilika are owned by farm families in neighboring villages, and the Vasilika farmers own some lands in other sections of the Boeotian plain and even in the surrounding foothills. By and large, however, the inhabitants cultivate lands of the
[133] quality characteristic of the Boeotian plains. These lie in East Central Greece,
134 north and west of the smaller plains of Attica. The flat land of Boeotia is one of Greece's few regions of moist, fertile soil. The Kiphisus river once flowed through the whole area, but earth movements and the porous limestone of the region, which permits underground drainage, have broken the continuity of the river's flow. The upper stream flows through a narrow mountain-bordered valley and then into a wide plain which was once covered by Lake Copais. The river is silt-laden, and the underground channels through which the water escapes tend to get blocked up. The land can not always absorb the waters of the winter rainy season as rapidly as they accumulate. Thus an especially wet winter can flood the fields so badly that they do not drain off in time for spring planting
[312] (Newbigin 1949:333). A system of controlling the waters exists for the land reclaimed by draining Lake Copais. However, the cultivated fields of Vasilika lie some miles past this region, and although the Kiphisus flows through their fields, the farmers have no method of draining off excess water. Consequently,
[134] they watch the winter rains with some apprehension. On the other hand, the regular winter flooding in ordinary years, along with the accumulation of alluvium enriched by humus, makes the soil suitable for two crops of wheat annually and for summer crops such as cotton and tobacco (Newbigin 1949:333).

241 Since the growing season for these last two crops is a dry one, the cotton
312 always requires irrigation and the tobacco sometimes does. The natural underground drainage system makes it possible to drill good wells almost anywhere
[406] in the fields, from which water may be drawn by diesel irrigation pumps. Many such wells have been dug and are serving Vasilika's farmers. Within the village itself there are nine wells in regular use. Only an unusually dry year brings any danger of serious water shortage for either ordinary household purposes or for
[363] irrigation. The mulberry trees which line the main village street and the occasional trees which appear here and there among the houses flourish because of the good water table and, in spring and summer, provide a pleasing contrast of dark green to the predominantly brown and orange tones of the village's land and houses.

49 The people of Vasilika, like those on the other plains of Greece, not
621 only have the advantage of larger tracts of more fertile soil but also are consider-
361 ably less isolated than the inhabitants of the mountain villages. As will be seen,
182

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)/863 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

windowless houses. There are also newer versions of the one-story house now being built in the village. They are one-room structures with red brick walls, flat roofs, and no facing of any kind to finish them off. This is the type of house several of the shepherd families have had built for themselves. They find them a considerable improvement over the reed huts. Two young farmers who have married girls from the village have also built houses like these for themselves in order to avoid having to live in the already cramped quarters of their parents.

The other types of construction in the village are stone-walled ovens which are usually extensions of the lower part of the house (access to them is always from outdoors), brick housing for the turkish-style latrines used in the village, stone parapets for the wells which are scattered throughout the village, and the occasional stone wall which surrounds a house compound. The most desired pattern for a household's compound in Vasilika is a large two-story house with an oven, one or two storage houses, a latrine, and a large yard with some mulberry trees, a grape arbor, and a small garden, all surrounded by a ten- or twelve-foot wall with one or two gates as the only mode of entrance and exit. One man in the village has just such a compound. Several others have similar ones, but with lower surrounding walls. For the rest, there may be fewer buildings and no enclosure, or perhaps the requisite buildings with a wire fencing as a substitute for the walls.

The first principle of arrangement of Vasilika's buildings is that places of public resort face the main street and are fairly close to each other at the western end of the village. The principle governing the arrangement of houses is different. They are individually oriented with respect to the street and to Mt. Parnassos (which is off to the northwest) but not with respect to each other. That is to say, the entrance to each house faces either in the direction of the street or directly away from the mountain. This is not true of outbuildings, however, the entrances of which are found on any of the four sides of the buildings. This combination of orientations and the habit of building enclosing stone walls or wire fencing, with the gates or paths through these on different sides, results in a clustering of structures randomly arranged with respect to each other. The single rocky path leading from one house door may reach the entrance of another house, or it may lead along a roundabout path which skirts the back of a storage house, or it may lead to a well yard or to a stone wall. A walk around several house compounds may be necessary to get from one house to the doorway of another which is right next to it. Some buildings have very narrow alleys between them; others are separated from each other by paths of differing widths and open spaces of varying size. The houses of Vasilika are not, therefore, arranged in neat rows with straight paths between, nor are they laid out in an orderly system of concentric semicircles or similar patterns of rectangles or squares. Since the buildings are of different heights themselves and stand on different levels of the hill and since there are no clear rows of paths, one does not get a panoramic view of the activities of the villagers as they move around close to their houses even when one looks down from the windows or verandas of the houses higher up on the slope. Instead, one may see only the back of another house, or a small part of a path which a neighbor uses. Even the